

Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

Bilagsnr.:	955
Land:	Sudan
Kilde:	OHCHR
Titel:	UN experts demand urgent action to protect civilians in Sudan as conflict intensifies
Udgivet:	3. oktober 2025
Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet:	30. oktober 2025



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UN experts demand urgent action to protect civilians in Sudan as conflict intensifies

03 October 2025

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GENEVA – UN experts* today expressed grave concern at reports of indiscriminate killings, mass displacement, sexual violence, enforced disappearance and obstruction of humanitarian assistance in Sudan,

warning that the scale and severity of the violations may amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity.

“We cannot allow Sudan to descend further into a nightmare of violence, hunger, and despair,” the experts said. “The deliberate targeting of civilians, combined with the use of starvation, sexual violence, disappearance and displacement as weapons of war, is creating a humanitarian catastrophe of historic proportions,” they said.

“Entire communities are being uprooted, families torn apart, and women and girls subjected to horrific levels of sexual violence.”

According to UN estimates, over 11 million people have been displaced, including 8.6 million internally displaced persons and over 3 million refugees, rendering Sudan the site of the world’s largest displacement crisis. El Fasher and other parts of Darfur remain under siege, where civilians face relentless bombardment, deliberate starvation tactics, and widespread destruction of homes and essential infrastructure. Aid delivery has been obstructed, leaving people without food, water or medical care.

The experts noted that nearly 2 million internally displaced persons have attempted to return to what remains of their homes, despite extremely complex and dangerous conditions, including landmines, destroyed infrastructure and lack of basic services.

“Durable solutions must be urgently pursued – whether return, local integration or resettlement – to ensure that displaced persons can rebuild their lives in dignity and safety,” the experts said.

The experts underscored that both the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), along with their affiliated groups, have been implicated in grave violations. “Reports of widespread conflict-related sexual violence, including rape, gang rape, torture, sexual slavery and forced marriage, are harrowing. Women and girls, particularly those displaced or from ethnic minority groups, are bearing the brunt of these atrocities,” the experts said, urging immediate access to comprehensive

medical, psychosocial, and sexual and reproductive health care services for survivors.

States and those with influence over the warring parties must act swiftly to reduce tensions and stop the violence, including through strong and coordinated diplomatic pressure, the experts said.

“There can be no justification for standing idle while atrocities continue,” they said.

“Starvation is being weaponised as a method of warfare, in clear violation of international law,” the experts said. “We are shocked by reports of civilians forced to eat animal fodder to survive, women and children being denied access to humanitarian food banks, and families digging graves along the roads as they attempt to flee.”

The social fabric is being torn apart under the weight of starvation, trauma, and repeated displacement. Without urgent action, the damage to Sudanese society may be irreparable.”

They condemned the targeting of aid workers, the detention of humanitarian staff and credible reports of sexual exploitation and abuse against those seeking refuge.

“Every day that passes without decisive action means more lives lost, more futures destroyed,” the experts said. “The international community must not look away from Sudan’s suffering, rather establish a roadmap to a lasting peace built on democracy, human rights and freedoms. We urge all parties to the conflict to immediately cease hostilities, respect international humanitarian and human rights law, and grant full and unhindered access to humanitarian assistance.”

They called on States to ensure accountability for violations, through universal jurisdiction and international mechanisms, and provide urgent support for displaced persons that uphold their dignity, safety and rights.

“The people of Sudan cannot afford more broken promises,” the experts said. “Silence in the face of Sudan’s suffering is complicity – the world

must act now.”

The experts have repeatedly expressed concerns with the authorities over escalating human rights violations in Sudan amid a climate of impunity.

***The experts:**

- Paula Gaviria, **Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons**
- K.P. Ashwini, **the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance**
- Morris Tidball-Binz, **the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions**
- Ben Saul, **the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism**
- Alice Jill Edwards, **the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment**
- Reem Alsalem, **the Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls, its causes and consequences**
- Claudia Flores (Chair), Ivana Krstić (Vice-Chair), Dorothy Estrada Tanck, Haina Lu, and Laura Nyirinkindi, **the Working Group on discrimination against women and girls**
- Gabriella Citroni (Chair-Rapporteur), Grażyna Baranowska (Vice-Chair), Aua Baldé; Ana Lorena Delgadillo Pérez, and Mohammed Al-Obaidi, **the Working Group on enforced or involuntary disappearances**

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UN Human Rights, country page – **SUDAN**

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